(d) whether any advance information about the occurrence of the diseases can be had beforehand and imparted to the concerned persons for taking precautionary measures?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) to (d) The information is being gathered and will be placed on the table of the Sabha.

Encouragement of Farmers to increase Agricultural Output

2474. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is Government's policy to encourage farmers to increase their agricultural output;

(b) if so, whether Government will ensure sale or processing of such produce at the places where farmers may like to sell or process freely;

(c) if so, by when; if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the restrictions imposed on processing/sale/purchase of agricultural inputs are adversely affecting agriculture production; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and by when they will be removed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Marketing and Processing of agricultural produce has been progressively liberalised. The farmers have reasonable freedom regarding processing and sale of agricultural produce. The draft Agriculture Policy Resolution placed in Parliament on 14.5.1993 envisages to enhance the focus on these aspects.

(d) and (e) By and large there are no restrictions on processing/sale/purchase of agricultural inputs by the farmers.

Free Trade in Agricultural Products

2475. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's policy is to encourage farmers to increase their production;

(b) if so, whether Government will permit farmers to purchase agricultural inputs of cheap and good quality from any country of the World without restrictions in order to raise their production;

(c) if so, by when; and

(d) if not, whether the restrictions are not contrary to the policy of Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The present import policy regarding agricultural inputs is quite pragmatic. Agricultural machinery and pesticides (technical grade material) can be imported under OGL. The import of DAP and MOP, two of the three major fertilisers has been decanalised. The New Policy on Seed Development 1988 provides for making available the best seeds and planting material in the World to our farmers to increase agricultural productivity, production and farm incomes.

Technique to Develop Potato Seeds

2476. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a new technique known as TPS or true potato seeds has been developed to increase the production of potato in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to make it popular?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The true potato seed technology makes use of seed and not the tuber for raising the potato crop. The technique requires only 100 gm. seed per ha. against nearly 3 tonnes of seed tubers. The yields are identical and TPS is resistant to late blight. Two hybrid TPS